



City of Seattle

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Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

**Department of Design, Construction and Land Use**

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE  
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND USE**

**Application Number:** 2300995

**Applicant Name:** John Schwartz for St. Mark's Cathedral

**Address of Proposal:** 1501 10<sup>th</sup> Ave SW

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Master Use Permit to change the use of a portion of an existing fine arts school to administrative office, private elementary school, and child care center in a landmark structure. Project includes the establishment of approximately 3 surface parking spaces. Ten existing parking spaces to be shared with adjacent site.

The following approvals are required:

**Administrative Conditional Use** - To allow administrative offices, fine arts school, private elementary school, and a child care center in a landmark structure in a single family zone. (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 23.44.026)

**SEPA DETERMINATION:** ☒ Exempt ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS

☐ DNS with conditions

☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition, or  
involving another agency with jurisdiction.

## **BACKGROUND DATA**

### **Site and Vicinity Description**

The project site is located along the west side of 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East between E Garfield Street and E Galer Street in Capitol Hill. At this location, 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East is paved with curbs, gutters and sidewalks. The site is zoned Single Family 5000 (SF5000) and currently contains a fine arts school known as Cornish College of the Arts. The site also has approximately 40 surface parking spaces located on the west side of the building. Located on site are areas designated as steep slope and potential slide, which are mapped as City of Seattle environmental critical areas (ECA).

Based on available documentation, the proposed project qualifies for an ECA exemption as all of the established parking will be located outside of the ECA and on previously developed property. Thus, this project proposal is also SEPA exempt pursuant to SMC 25.05.800 as the proposed parking and the new uses are below SEPA thresholds and located outside of an ECA.

Development in the vicinity includes St. Mark's Cathedral to the south, and single family structures to the north and east. Zoning in the vicinity is largely characterized by the Single Family 5000 (SF 5000) designation.

### **Proposal Description**

The applicant is proposing to change the use of a portion of an existing fine arts school to administrative office, private elementary school, and child care center in a landmark structure. Project includes the establishment of approximately 3 surface parking spaces. St. Mark's Cathedral is purchasing this adjacent site from Cornish. However, this project site will remain a separate development site, and is not considered an expansion of the existing St. Mark's Cathedral site. Ten existing parking spaces on the Cathedral site will be shared with the uses in the St. Nicholas building.

### **Public Comment**

No comment letters were received during the official public comment period, which ended May 7, 2003.

## **ANALYSIS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE (SMC 23.44.026)**

### **Use of Landmark Structures**

- A. *The Director may authorize a use not otherwise permitted in the zone within a structure designated as a landmark pursuant to the Seattle Municipal Code. Chapter 25.12, Landmark Preservation Ordinance, subject to the following development standards:*

1. *The use shall be compatible with the existing design and/or construction of the structure without significant alterations; and*

No structural changes are proposed under this permit application.

2. *The use shall be allowed only when it is demonstrated that uses permitted in the zone are impractical because of structure design and/or that no permitted use can provide adequate financial support necessary to sustain the structure in a reasonably good physical condition; and*

New or expanding institutions are allowed in Single Family zones pursuant to the following Administrative Conditional Use Criteria:

*The lot line of any proposed new or expanding institution, other than child care centers locating in legally established institutions, shall be located six hundred feet (600') or more from any lot line of any other institution in a residential zone, with certain exceptions.*

Given the fact that the St. Mark's Cathedral site abuts the proposed site, the new institutional uses would not meet the dispersion requirement and would not be permitted in the Single Family zone. With this in mind, given the size and design of the landmark structure, it would be financially infeasible for the applicant to convert the existing space into a permitted use such as a single family residence. So in order to maintain the historic landmark structure, the applicant is requesting to maintain the existing institutional use with the addition of a private elementary school, child care center, and administrative offices.

Approximately one third of the existing structure (12,316 SF) is proposed to be occupied by a private school and child care center. Approximately one half of the existing structure (17,000 SF) is proposed to continue the existing established use of a post-secondary fine arts academy. Given the buildings previous use for fine art education, the necessary infrastructure such as HVAC capacity, is already in place and represents a significant financial investment for the owner.

Of the remaining 11,320 SF, 4,660 SF are located in the basement and are not suitable for any of the permitted uses. An additional 4,300 SF is comprised of a large contiguous space that the current tenant (Cornish) will continue to occupy and is therefore not available for a new use. This leaves 2,360 SF which is primarily used for circulation, i.e. common corridors, bathrooms, mechanical spaces and a small amount of space that is not suitable for any of the permitted uses, and is therefore proposed to be used as administrative offices. St. Mark's wants to use this space to provide much needed relief to the currently over-crowded administrative offices in the St. Mark's Cathedral.

St. Mark's needs to be able to lease a significant portion of the existing landmark structure in order to meet their debt service obligation for the property purchase and to build sufficient financial reserves to maintain the landmark features of the existing building.

3. *The use shall not be detrimental to other properties in the zone or vicinity or to the public interest.*

The site is now in common ownership with the St. Mark's Cathedral properties to the south, allowing a substantial increase in the cooperative use of the overall site and its features. A portion of the building is being returned to the use for which the building was constructed and used for 60 years, (private elementary school), and nearly half the building will continue to be used as it has for the last 20 years, fine arts education. The remaining portion will be dedicated to a less intensive office use and will primarily house people who are already present on the site. Since the private elementary school and child care center are new additions to the existing institutional uses, a transportation plan was also included in the application material. The transportation plan demonstrated that through the change in use, peak hour trips will actually be decreased. However, a condition has been placed on this project in order to mitigate the potential for spill-over parking into the neighborhood during peak parking hours.

- B. *The parking requirements for a use allowed in a landmark are those listed in Chart A of Section 23.54.015. These requirements may be waived pursuant to Section 23.54.020 C.*

This proposal will meet the parking requirements by providing parking on-site and through a shared parking agreement with the St. Mark's Cathedral site to the south.

#### **DECISION - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE**

The conditional use application is **CONDITIONALLY GRANTED**.

#### **CONDITIONS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE**

Prior to issuance of the MUP:

- St. Mark's shall provide an agreement allowing for additional parking to be provided on the St. Mark's Cathedral site during peak parking hours. The agreement should outline how the parking will be accommodated and managed during those hours.
- The access easement across the northern portion of the St. Mark's Cathedral site shall be recorded with the King County Assessor's Office, with a copy sent to DCLU.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature on file) Date: August 7, 2003  
Bryan Stevens, Land Use Planner  
Department of Design, Construction and Land Use  
Land Use Services

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